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21 APR 1976

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training
FROM : [REDACTED]
Orientation Coordinator
SUBJECT : Course Report
Special Overseas Orientation (SOO)

1. General: This was the first regular running of the Special Overseas Orientation (SOO), conducted during the period 12-13 April 1976, in Room 1A07 Headquarters. During the first day of the program 56 Agency employees in addition to 17 spouses were in attendance, while during the second day, which is only open to Agency employees, 52 trainees were in attendance. Orientation critiques correlated closely with the results achieved in the 30-31 March pilot running and indicated that the majority of trainees rated the two-day program in the "good" category. Individual comments, however, reflected a wide variety of views and opinions as to what changes should be made in future runnings. These comments, along with those of lecturer and panel participants in the Orientation will be thoroughly reviewed before the next running, which is scheduled for 13-14 May. In essence, it is the Coordinator's opinion that although some adjustments should be made in terms of depth of coverage, consolidation of presentations, elimination of duplication, and possibly some addition of new material, basically the present program strikes a reasonable balance when considering the diverse needs of Agency personnel being assigned overseas.

2. Composition of Class: Of the 52 Agency employees who attended the second day of the Orientation, 24 were from the DDA (almost all from the Office of Communications); 7 from the DDI, 18 from the DDO, and 3 from the DDS&T (see Attachment B, Roster). In terms of Agency experience, the range was from 6 months to 22 years, with the medium being 7.63 years. Average age ranged from 21 years to 52 years, with the medium being 32.7 years. Grades ranged from GS-04 to GS-17, with the average being GS-09.25. Of the 24 DDA trainees, 17 had less than one year of Agency service, undoubtedly reflecting the large number of young communications officers going overseas with the Agency for their first time. Of the 17 spouses who attended the first day, 10 were overseas before, while 7 were going out for the first time. The above profile may not be typical of future class compositions, since the current running may have had a larger than normal input of communications officers due to OC's training cycle fitting in rather well with SOO scheduling.

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3. Class Participation: Considering that this was a very diverse group, rather large and only together for two days (one for Agency spouses), the level of trainee interest and participation in question periods was good. A one hour question period following a panel on "Terrorist Modus Operandi" showed excellent trainee response, and went better than expected. The panel at the end of the first day's session (see Attachment A, Schedule), elicited considerable discussion on cover, but fell short on personnel security practices overseas. A number of changes are being suggested for the next running, including a separate discussion for spouses, to be chaired by an experienced female officer. Based on critique comments, there was also high interest in the "Physical, Residential and Personal Security" and the "Contingency Planning for Urban Survival" presentations. The ITG panel, "Nature of the Terrorist Threat, An Overview," did not go over as well as expected, notwithstanding that it was a more solid presentation than in the pilot program. It is the Coordinator's opinion that it may have been a case of overkill, particularly with a younger class perhaps more oriented to "hands-on training" than political and policy discussions.

4. Other Trainee Comments: (See Attachment D, Evaluation Comments.)

5. Orientation Evaluation: (See Attachment C, Evaluation.) For comparison purposes, each objective of the Orientation was rated for each day and then compared with the evaluation in the March pilot running. As will be noted in Attachment D, there is a fairly good correlation, although as could be expected with a larger class, (45 critiques as opposed to 18 in evaluating the first day), there was more spread. Generally speaking, the evaluations for the first day in the regular running were not quite as good as in the pilot running, while the evaluations for the second day in the regular running were somewhat better than in the pilot program. Since many trainees were not very conscientious in preparing their evaluations, it is rather difficult to draw any firm conclusions from them. Based on available data, it would appear that most husbands did not find the first day's presentations overly intimidating for their respective spouses, and the coverage just about right. As noted previously, a number of younger officers would have preferred something less political and policy oriented on the first day, with less mention of Agency and terrorist organizational components, and something more positive in the way of how to cope with the threat. There were mixed reactions on the various films used, with some trainees commenting very favorably on them, and others being less enthusiastic. A number of critiques suggested that the [redacted] presentation on "Urban Contingency Planning" be made available to spouses, and this will be given further study.

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One Agency employee rated the Orientation very low, but her complaint was not with the content itself, but that she was required to take

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the course in the first place. She already had read extensively on the subject and felt that she was going to an overseas area where the terrorist threat was minimal [redacted]. Her case is probably not unique, and it suggests the need for better guidance to component training officers as to the type of trainees who should be enrolled in the SOO. It was noted that in the current running there were at least seven officers who were scheduled to take the CTTC at [redacted] in the very near future. For these officers much of their SOO training will be redundant, and they probably should only have been enrolled in the CTTC. [redacted] is preparing a memorandum on the subject, and it is hoped to have the problem resolved in the very near future, although some duplication between the courses is inevitable.

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6. Proposed Changes in Next Running: Despite the fact that a number of changes were made since the pilot running, such as expanding the introduction on the first day and putting the terrorist problem in a better perspective, eliminating the lecture on "Recognizing the Threat," eliminating the panel at the end of the second day, and adding a short talk on the "Bomb Threat," some additional changes will be required for the next running. It might be added that not all of the proposed changes which were suggested after the pilot running materialized. The OTS speaker who was to talk on the "Bomb Threat" failed to show up (it apparently slipped his mind), the OS speaker on "Physical, Residential, and Personal Security" ended his talk 30 minutes short of the time allotted (despite complaining of being cut 30 minutes from the pilot running time, where he also ended his talk 30 minutes short), and the panel speaker from Benefits and Services did not show up, possibly because he presented a separate lecture to the Communications trainees the previous week [redacted] and felt his presentation in the SOO would be redundant.

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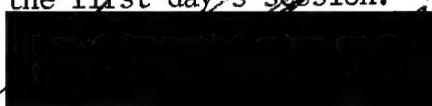
A matter which will have to be resolved before the May 13-14 running is whether the remaining two briefings provided for overseas designees by the Office of Security and the Medical Services Staff [redacted] (Drug Seminar) should be incorporated into this training program. At the 16 April meeting of the Counterterrorism Working Group, it was recommended that it would be desirable to include these two briefings in SOO. If it is decided to do so, these briefings would have to be included into the first day's program, which would require a number of changes in the present coverage. Considering the extensive restructuring which may be required to accommodate the above two briefings, it is recommended that a meeting of all participants in the SOO be held in order to obtain a broader consensus as to what changes should be made for the May running. Other points which should be discussed at this meeting are the following:

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- A. The possibility of dropping the "Nature of the Terrorist Threat, An Overview" from the first day and substituting for it the "Modus Operandi of Selected Terrorist Groups," now given on the second day.
- B. Eliminating the OMS lecture, "Coping with Possible Hostage Situations," and only showing the movie, "Kidnap Executive Style."
- C. Eliminating the separate talk on the "Bomb Threat," and including a few pertinent comments on the handling of parcel and letter bombs in the "Physical, Residential, and Personal Security" block.
- D. Including the presentation on "Contingency Planning for Urban Survival" in the first day's presentation. It applies to spouses perhaps more than to Agency employees.
- E. Arranging for a separate conference room for a panel to be chaired by an experienced Agency employee who has served in critical areas overseas, supported by two other Agency spouses who have served overseas, to talk to female spouses and Agency female employees who are going overseas for the first time.
- F. Including a 50-minute block of instruction, perhaps with three senior Agency officers speaking 15 minutes each, on the subjects of cover, benefits and services, and Agency Headquarter's and field support available in a crisis situation. This presentation would be open to both Agency employees and their spouses.
- G. Discuss the desirability of using a simplified critique form which could be read out by computer to save time and effort in compiling the presently unwieldy form.

By incorporating the above changes, the Program could be reduced in terms of the coverage now given in the second day, but more time may be required for subjects now covered in the first day's session. 

Atts:

A - Schedule C - Evaluation
B - Roster D - Evaluation Comments